

## Pacific County

Protecting  
Jobs and Increasing Job Opportunities:

### Small Port Dredging:

Access to our ports and harbors is critical to our fishermen and seafood processors. The Ilwaco Channel and the marina of the Port of Ilwaco were formerly dredged by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) on a regular basis. When the Administration eliminated dredging of small ports from the budget of the Corps, Congressman Baird fought and secured more than \$1,000,000 over several years to fund Corps dredging of the Ilwaco Channel.

The Port of Chinook faces similar siltation problems, which limit the navigation to and from the Port to high tide only. This presents a navigational hazard and economic hardship to fishermen and companies located at the Port of Chinook. Without dredging, the channel to the Port of Chinook, a local crab fish processor and several other fishing companies would have been forced to close and relocate, causing the loss of over 60 jobs. Congressman Baird was successful in securing \$500,000 for dredging at the Port of Chinook and will continue to fight to secure funding for small port dredging.

Sardine  
Fishery:

Congressman Baird, along with Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, protected sardine fishery jobs in Pacific and Cowlitz Counties by urging the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) to increase the allowable allocation of the sardine fishery to Washington, Oregon, and Northern California. As a result, the PFMC increased the allocation of the sardine fishery to our region, preventing the loss of seasonal workers, creating new jobs, and encouraging business expansion and development in Southwest Washington.

### Crab Fishery:

As annual maintenance dredging at the Mouth of the Columbia River continues, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers uses sites along the shoreline and in the ocean to dispose of dredged material. The crab fishing industry is very concerned about navigational safety, the environmental impact to crabs and crab habitat, and the economic impact to the crab fishery of this practice. Congressman Baird has brought the crab fishing industry, the Corps, ports, local government officials, and others together to find commonsense solutions to address the safety and environmental concerns and to use the dredge material for productive purposes.

### Cranberries:

Having visited with many cranberry farmers in Southwest Washington, Congressman Baird understands firsthand the economic damages when

prices fall due to surpluses of berries. The huge surplus that accumulated in 2000 and 2001 caused dramatic decreases in producer prices, threatening the viability of our domestic cranberry industry. To combat declining prices, Baird successfully passed an amendment in Congress to direct the USDA to purchase additional cranberries and to provide \$20 million in market loss payments to growers.

Congressman Baird also worked to find funding to develop new cranberry varieties, which would allow Southwest Washington growers to produce berries of superior quality to foreign imports. In 2004 he secured \$425,000 for the Northwest Center for Small Fruits Research, which conducts research on innovative genetic and environmental technologies, intended to increase grower returns and improve product taste and quality. This research will help keep the area's growers competitive in the global marketplace.

Additionally, cranberry farmers have successfully used federal EQUIP funding to help deal with environmental concerns regarding herbicides and pesticides. Brian has advocated sustained funding for EQUIP and the adaptation of regulations to meet the unique demands of cranberry farming.

Finally, a recent paperwork delay at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) threatened to disrupt growers' ability to harvest their berries in a timely manner. Congressman Baird personally intervened and convinced the EPA to expedite their procedures to allow the harvest to begin on schedule. Fortunately, the cranberry market has begun to improve and growers are beginning to once again make ends meet, but they face ongoing challenges and Congressman Baird is committed to helping meet those challenges.

Protecting the Environment and the Economy:

Fighting Invasive Species:

Invasive species are plant or animal species that are introduced to local environments with no natural enemies, quickly spreading and in many cases overtaking other organisms in the area. While invasives can be found across the nation, areas of Willapa Bay are struggling to control an invasive weed, *Spartina Alterniflora*, which is taking over the regional mudflats and wetlands. *Spartina's* invasion of Willapa Bay not only threatens the region's multi-million dollar oyster industry and the jobs that rely on it, but also thousands of acres of pristine wetland habitat for migratory birds and other protected wildlife. In response to this threat to our regional economy and environment, Congressman Baird is leading the fight in Congress to wipe out invasive species, and repair the damage they have done.

In October 2003, Congressman Baird hosted a summit on the health and future of the Willapa Bay, bringing community leaders together with federal, state and local officials to develop a plan to protect

the bay's resources, culture, and local economy. Additionally, working closely with Congressman Norm Dicks and Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray, Congressman Baird secured \$1,050,000 in appropriations for Fiscal Year 2004 and \$1,400,000 for FY 2005 to help the US Fish and Wildlife Service eradicate Spartina in Willapa Bay.

Furthermore, Congressman Baird worked with regulatory agencies to expedite approval of an herbicide that is both more effective against Spartina and more environmentally friendly. Spartina eradication efforts in the Willapa Bay region are beginning to show success - 2003 marked the first year since treatment began that more Spartina was destroyed than emerged or spread.

#### Supporting the Shellfish Industry:

The West Coast shellfish industry produces approximately \$85 million worth of oysters, clams, and mussels annually. The shellfish products produced on these farms bring new dollars and valuable jobs to rural West Coast communities, including many in Southwest Washington. In early 2004, Congressman Baird hosted a summit with local shellfish growers, USDA, NOAA, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to discuss grower's concerns and find solutions to benefit our region.

To help meet the threats of Spartina grass, Congressman Baird has worked closely with Congressman Norm Dicks to bring millions of dollars to eradicate Spartina from the Willapa Bay and other estuaries. He has also worked with regulatory agencies to help expedite the availability of more effective and environmentally sensitive herbicides, both for Spartina and to combat Ghost Shrimp. Most recently, Congressman Baird secured almost \$400,000 in the fiscal year 2005 Agricultural Appropriations bill for shellfish growers to fight such threats. Currently, the Congressman is working with growers and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to help resolve disputes regarding the traditional aquaculture practices that have existed for generations in our area.

#### Coastal Erosion Control:

##### Shoalwater Bay Shore Erosion:

In recent decades, the land resources of the Shoalwater Bay Tribe have been eroded by coastal generated forces. This land serves as a protective barrier against ocean and storm generated destructive forces. Rep. Baird worked with Rep. Norm Dicks to secure \$650,000 to combat coastal erosion around the Shoalwater Bay. The funds appropriated will complete a study to evaluate, analyze and define the cause of the coastal erosion of land and begin a construction project to halt future erosion.

##### Benson Beach:

Benson Beach is located in the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park (formerly Cape Disappointment State Park and Fort Canby State

Park) in Pacific County. In recent years, the beach has experienced heavy erosion and damage to parking lots and other infrastructure. Congressman Baird secured \$200,000 for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to implement the first phase of a pilot project which placed approximately 43,000 cubic yards of sand at Benson Beach. The project was supported by the Washington State Parks Service, Pacific County, the Columbia River Channel Coalition (CRCC), Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce (CREST), and the Columbia River Crab Fishermen Association (CRCFA). Additional funding to complete the first phase of the project was provided by the CRCC, the Port of Kalama, and the Port of Vancouver. Following the first allocation of funds, Baird secured \$905,000 for the Benson Beach project and he is continuing to seek further remedies to this erosion problem and to ensure that the North Jetty, which has gradually been deteriorating, is repaired and strengthened.

#### Increasing Public Safety and Combating Crime:

##### Methamphetamine:

As a founding member of the Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamine, Congressman Baird has diligently worked to provide Washington communities with funding to fight this menace. Baird's efforts have helped to bring in more than \$11 million to combat methamphetamine use and clean meth contaminated sites in Washington state.

#### Preserving Our History:

##### Lewis and Clark National Historical Park:

Lewis and Clark and their Corps of Discovery reached the Pacific Ocean at the mouth of the Columbia River in November 1805. In anticipation of the 200 year commemoration of that historic event, Congressman Baird has co-chaired the Congressional Lewis and Clark Caucus and has led efforts to recognize Southwest Washington's many historical treasures.

In order to ensure that sites on both sides of the Columbia River were recognized for their role in Lewis and Clark's journey, Congressman Baird introduced legislation to authorize and create the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. The bill received broad support from local communities, state and federal government representatives and the U.S. Department of the Interior. On July 19, 2004 it passed the U.S. House of Representatives with unanimous support. Similar legislation passed in the Senate and was signed into law on October 30, 2004.

The new park incorporates an existing Park Service site at Fort Clatsop in Oregon and three Washington state sites - Cape Disappointment State Park (formerly Fort Canby), Megler's Rest Area and Station Camp near McGowan, Washington. With the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery and preparations for the Destination Pacific Signature Events already underway, the creation of a national

historic park incorporating Southwest Washington and Oregon's Lewis and Clark sites is timely and crucial to provide visitors with the full story of this historic journey in the Pacific Northwest.

#### Making Government More Effective and Efficient:

##### Streamlining the environmental permitting process:

Protecting the environment is always a priority, but regulatory processing and permitting have become unnecessarily costly and time consuming. In recent years, Congressman Baird has organized a series of meetings throughout Southwest Washington to bring local business leaders, farmers, builders, ports and others together with federal, state and local officials to improve the permitting process. As a direct result, several federal and state agencies have made significant progress in streamlining permits, reducing application backlogs and complexity, and improving coordination to expedite the process. There is still work to be done, and much room for improvement, but Congressman Baird will continue to work with the consumers of permits and agency representatives to push for further improvements in efficiency and savings in time and money.

#### Protecting Mental Health Care:

##### Mental Health Care under Medicaid:

For the past 11 years Washington state has used federal Medicaid funds in conjunction with state funds to provide mental health care to Medicaid eligible patients as well as to patients who need service but do not qualify for Medicaid. In April 2004, the federal agency that oversees Medicaid and Medicare, CMS, required that, effective January 1, 2005, the state cease using their Medicaid funds to serve patients who do not qualify for Medicaid. This change, which came at a time the State Legislature was out of session and could not meet to solve the problem, threatened to suddenly terminate mental health care for 40,000 patients across our state.

As a former clinical psychologist who has worked in community mental clinics, Congressman Baird understands the importance of mental health care in our communities. With the proper sustained treatment, people who would otherwise be debilitated by their illness can be functioning, contributing members of society. When he learned of the proposed rule change by CMS and the potential loss of treatment for patients in need, Congressman Baird took immediate action.

After consulting with members of the legislature and state agencies, Congressman Baird personally contacted administrators at the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The Congressman drew upon his own professional background to explain the needs of the patients and the harm that could result from terminating their services. He then requested an extension be granted to give the state time to arrange alternative funding to continue the care. To their great credit, officials within CMS were willing to work closely with the Congressman

and the state and in late December a six month waiver was granted, extending care through June 2005. This measure will save the state of Washington over \$20 million and, more importantly, will allow 40,000 of our citizens to continue to receive the care and treatment they need to be productive, functioning members of our communities.

Pacific County Government

Pacific County Economic Development Council

Pacific County P.U.D.

Lewis and Clark Expedition

Pacific County Historical Society and Museum

Pacific County's Sheriff's Office

Willapa  
Harbor Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Information  
Center

Lewis  
County Historical Museum

Pacific County Department of Public Works

Pacific County School Districts

